

July 28, 1994

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TO: Ambassador Albright
THROUGH: Ambassador Gnehm
FROM: POLSEC - Cameron R. Hume
SUBJECT: July 28 Principals Meeting: Recognition of Rwanda

Background

Recognition is primarily a practical, tactical issue. Since the U.S. recognizes states, not governments, there is no legal question, only a question of timing.

A state can be credentialled to the General Assembly and the Security Council without U.S. diplomatic recognition. The U.S. has not opposed credentialling in at least 20 years. We favor an inclusive UN, have opposed the politicization of the credentialling process, and typically have viewed credentialling as a technical matter. We would want to pay close attention to the views of other key states in the region and elsewhere. A principled stand against credentialling would be difficult to reverse when the time came.

Rwanda is scheduled to become SC President in September, a job for which it is -- and was before the crisis -- wholly unprepared. This is not an important enough consideration to drive our policy or recognition or credentialling, but we might urge Rwanda to waive its SC presidential turn for practical reasons.

Withholding diplomatic recognition is probably not as great a stick as envisioned in the decision paper, would be confusing in light of that option's call for contacts with the Rwandan Hutu President and Prime Minister, and could hamstring our activities in Rwanda. Unless other key states oppose seating the new Rwandan government, an unlikely event, U.S. opposition to credentialling Rwanda would face even more problems.

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Talking Points

- o The issue of diplomatic recognition is not a legal issue, but a tactical one.
- o It would be difficult to take a principled position against recognition or credentialling of a government which includes bona fide Tutsi and Hutu leaders and with which we and the UN are working on relief efforts.
- o Our decision on recognition should be guided by our best assessment -- especially that of A/S Moose -- of its effect on our goals for Rwanda: repatriation of the refugees, provision of aid, consolidation of a moderate and broad-based government, and reconstruction of the social infrastructure.
- o Our decision on credentialling in the UN should be no tougher than our decision on recognition and should follow our custom of viewing credentials issues as technical matters.

drafted: POLSEC -- WBWood
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